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FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON VARIOUS ISSUES

PY151305 Buenos Aires CRONICA in Spanish 14 May 79 p 6 PY

[Excerpt] The foreign minister of Argentina, Brig Gen Carlos Washington Pastor, has stated that "international pressures of any kind are inadmissible and cannot be accepted to solve a domestic problem." He was commenting on the situation of the former director of the newspaper LA OPINION, Jacobo Timerman. Pastor also stated that "there should be honesty both at home and abroad to recognize that there has been great progress" in the human rights field.

The foreign minister said: "We know that the OAS Human Rights Commission hears voices adverse to our government, but we trust that they also hear ours." Pastor, whose remarks were made during a news report, explained that the postponement of the May visit the commission "was due to normal problems in the OAS."

He said first that they expect to hear "voices adverse" to the government in this respect, but also added that "we are sure of our position--it was not we who started the subversive war that has now been overcome. Now that the war begun by irresponsible ideologists is over, we have one clear goal--the full exercise of constitutional guarantees," he added.

"We came to power at a time of confusion to create the conditions necessary to be able to live in a climate of respect for human rights," Pastor said. "The entire world should understand once and for all that we Argentines are the ones most interested in ending this type of problem." He concluded by saying: "There should also be honesty at home and abroad to recognize that there has been great progress in this field."

During the report, he was asked: "In view of international pressures, do you believe there could soon be developments in the situation of Jacobo Timerman." The foreign minister answered: "I find it difficult to accept the question as it is posed. International pressures of any kind are inadmissible and cannot be accepted to solve a domestic problem exclusively under Argentine jurisdiction."

The foreign minister stated that the Timerman case does not fall under his jurisdiction, but under that of the Interior Ministry. However, he did say it was his job to evaluate its repercussions abroad. With respect to this, he stated that "a good deal of confusion has been created and the prisoner's situation has been linked to false antisemitism on the part of the government.

"It would be a serious error, or merely ill will, to use this case as an example of antisemitism which absolutely does not exist. Anyone who wants to prove this, has to do nothing more than to visit Argentina, meet with the vast and prosperous Jewish community and ask if their freedom of religion and education is respected and whether there is discrimination of any sort."

SEVERAL PARTIES MEET TO DISCUSS COMMON TACTICS

PY151241 Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 14 May 79 p 13 PY

[Text] Representatives of Peronist parties and the Intransigent Party [PI], the Popular Conservative Party [PCP] and the Unified Socialist Party [PSU] have met to further discuss the establishment of common tactics. Among others, the following attended the meeting: Deolindo Bittel, Paulino Niembro and Carlos Tuozzo (Peronists); Oscar Alende, Raul Rabanaque Caballero and Mariano Lorences (PI); Vicente Soland Lima (PCP); and Simon Alberto Lazara (PSU).

During the meeting, they tried to establish the degree of agreement reached by those sectors among themselves, and they reportedly arrived at the conclusion that it is time to establish a policy action which, under present circumstances, would define them as opponents of the government. In this respect, they would try to establish a joint critical position against the official sector on current issues which go beyond the problem of democracy as an aspiration. The agreement among these sectors reportedly would not exclude any group. They would try to group political factions so that future pronouncements on national issues would have the force of a broad civic representation.

CORDOBA UNION LEADER ORDERED RELEASED

PY160146 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1405 GMT 15 May 79 PY

[Text] Cordoba, 15 May (TELAM)--Federal Court Chief Adolfo Zamboni Ledesma has ordered the release of union leader Domingo Alberto Iglesias, secretary general of the Mine Workers Association, who was under arrest along with 14 other union leaders released last week. Iglesias, as well as the other leaders, were freed under oath without affecting the charge to be brought against them of violating law 21,400 which this court is in charge of.

The judge's decision was made after receiving the reports from the National Records Office [Registro Nacional de Reincidencia] which sent the court information on the background of the prisoner. With respect to Jose Oviedo, who was part of the group of 17 persons arrested for supporting the national day of protest and the unsuccessful strike of 27 April, the Records Office has still not submitted its report, which is essential for his release. Meanwhile, the summary ordered against Horacio Paez, who was arrested in connection with the day of protest and the strike, is still being handled by the federal police office.

FLOODS CAUSE EVACUATIONS IN FORMOSA PROVINCE

PY151150 Buenos Aires Noticias Argentinas in Spanish 0141 GMT 15 May 79 PY

[Text] Formosa, 14 May (NA)--Approximately 2,500 persons have been evacuated so far in this province as a result of the flooding already affecting many riverbank areas due to the persistent increase in the Paraguay River all along Clorinda and Puerto Pilcomayo. The Argentine Naval Prefecture as well as the Civilian Defense Commission agree in pointing out that the health situation of the people affected by the flooding is good. The waters of the Paraguay River are expected to increase significantly with the waters of the Pilcomayo and Bermejo rivers, which are also rising. The river at this capital reached 6.3 meters at 1800, an average increase of 10 to 12 centimeters every 24 hours.

Meanwhile, there was much activity at the government house today while officials worked on the evacuation. They intend to ask for the help of the Social Emergencies Office of the Federal Social Welfare Ministry before the flood situation becomes uncontrollable. It is estimated here that the Paraguay River will continue to rise at this rate this week. Finally, sources from the Argentine Naval Prefecture have expressed their concern over the increase in the Iguazu River, which is rising at the rate of 1 meter every 6 hours. They added that this would cause a much slower drainage of the Paraguay River waters into the Parana River, which would already be filled by the excess waters of the Iguazu River. [PY--Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish at 1220 GMT on 15 May reports that the rise in Parana River, expected to continue for the next 48 hours, has also caused flooding in Misiones Province where 228 persons have already been evacuated and another 300 are expected to be evacuated today.]

FOREIGN MINISTRY DENIES TALK OF ARMS SALE TO IRAQ

PY160245 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0025 GMT 16 May 79 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 15 May (LATIN)--The Brazilian Government today denied that it has discussed the sale of weapons to Iraq with that nation's vice president, Taha Muhyi ad-Din Ma'ruf, who is on an official visit to this capital. Ma'ruf postponed until tomorrow most of the activities scheduled for today, saying that he is tired. He met with the president, Gen Joao Baptista de Figueiredo, and Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, postponing his visits to Congress and the Supreme Court until tomorrow.

Ma'ruf arrived in this capital yesterday and will leave for Sao Paulo tomorrow after holding a press conference. He has eliminated from his itinerary the visit to Salvador in Bahia State.

According to the official Foreign Ministry spokesman, Bernardo Pericas, the talks the Iraqi vice president held with Brazilian authorities and the three work sessions held at the Ministries of Mines and Energy, Industry and Commerce and Aeronautics did not include a discussion of the export of Brazilian war materiel to Iraq. He also denied that any discussions concerning oil sales by Iraq to Brazil had taken place. Pericas stated that the situation in this field is stable and that Iraq, with more than 400,000 barrels daily, is Brazil's largest oil supplier.

AGREEMENT REACHED ON OIL PURCHASE FROM ANGOLA

PY120252 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 11 May 79 PY

[Text] PETROBRAS and the State Oil Company of the People's Republic of Angola [SONANGOL] today signed a cooperation agreement to insure future cooperation in areas of activities of PETROBRAS and its subsidiaries BRASPETRO, INTERBRAS and PETROBRAS Distribution Company. SONANGOL will supply PETROBRAS roughly 1 million tons of oil in 1980 at official prices of the Angolan Government.

MINES AND ENERGY MINISTER COMMENTS ON NUCLEAR PLANS

PY160304 Paris AFP in Spanish 0339 GMT 15 May 79 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 14 May (AFP)--Cesar Cals, Brazilian mines and energy minister, stated here today that his country "has resisted, resists and will continue to resist all foreign pressure against uranium reprocessing in Brazil." The minister made this remark during a press conference, and added that the Brazilian-FRG nuclear agreement signed in June 1975 will be fully honored. He also said that several developing nations, although he did not specify which, are interested in signing technical cooperation agreements with Brazil in the nuclear field.

Cals also said that Brazil plans to carry out agreements with other more developed nations in the nuclear field in order "to obtain technology" from various sources so it will not depend solely on German technology. The agreement signed by Brazil with the FRG in June 1975 includes the entire chain of operations necessary to produce nuclear energy, from the prospecting of uranium deposits, their withdrawal and treatment, to the construction of eight uranium enrichment plants and another nuclear fuel reprocessing plant.

COLUMNIST QUESTIONS CARTER'S ACCEPTANCE OF SALT II

PY160226 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 12 May 79 p 3 PY

[From the "Notes and Information" page: "Why Does Carter Agree to SALT II?]

[Excerpts] Salt II will be signed by representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union, Presidents Carter and Brezhnev, in mid-June in Vienna.

All the main U.S. leaders--President Carter, Defense Secretary Brown and Secretary of State Vance--have dedicated solemn statements to the importance of this outstanding and decisive contribution to world peace. But the atmosphere in Moscow is quite different, although not surprisingly.

The New York TIMES correspondent in Moscow, David Shipler, describes the atmosphere this way: "The euphoria which followed the signing of SALT I by Presidents Brezhnev and Nixon in 1972 does not exist this time. Instead of conducting a campaign of moderate cordiality toward the United States--a usual tactic adopted as the signing of important agreements such as this draws near--the Soviet press criticizes President Carter and calls the opponents of the treaty enemies of detente and warns that the pact is not a panacea destined to stop the arms race." It seems appropriate then to ask at this point what is the objective of a disarmament agreement? The tone adopted by Moscow in view of the new agreement shows that the Soviet Union feels stronger and can afford to hurl threats.

The Soviet Union won the first diplomatic battle when it succeeded in initiating the negotiations against the insistence of Carter, and particularly of Brzezinski--a severe and clever critic of Kissinger's detente policy--in linking the superweapons problem with other vital questions of international policy, such as Soviet expansionism in Africa and the communist proxy coups which have lately been led by the Soviets themselves. In fact, the Salt II negotiations unfolded just as the Soviets wanted, without linking questions such as expansionism and human rights not related to detente. Now they say that the agreement is not a panacea for disarmament. And the Americans have just accepted this thesis also. Harold Brown, head of the Pentagon, has made a declaration that serves as propaganda material for the agreement, pointing out its advantages. The following is one of the points in that declaration: "Salt II will not keep us from doing whatever is necessary in areas in which the Soviet challenge is not limited. For instance, we can work with our allies both in the modernization of forces and in the control of armaments in response to problems created by the increase in Soviet nuclear forces. Here once again this question is pertinent: What good is this SALT agreement--an agreement for whose U.S. congressional approval the allied powers and the Western press, the U.S. Government and its agencies are launching delirious--and counterproductive, in our opinion--propaganda?

The Chinese have been skeptical as to the moderation of the Soviets. We just want to ask this question: Who can believe that the Soviets, who achieved numerical superiority in atomic weapons under the umbrella of SALT I, will be willing to eliminate hundreds of more missiles than the Americans would, just because of the provisions of SALT II?

PRESENT STATE OF STRIKE ACTIVITY REPORTED

PY151810 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1524 15 May 79 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 15 May (LATIN)--The strikes unleashed throughout the country have begun to decline with the solution of the metal workers conflict and the suspension of the public school teachers strike in the Federal District of Brasilia.

At the same time, Labor Minister Murilo Macedo has reported that he is studying the withdrawal of government intervention in Sao Paulo metal workers unions ordered when 250,000 workers of this sector went on strike in March. In remarks made to the news media of Sao Paulo, Macedo indicated that since the metal workers and businessmen have reached an accord, thus overcoming the threat of a new strike, "it is the duty of the government to withdraw intervention in the unions" of Santo Andre, San Bernardo and San Caetano districts, otherwise known as the ABC group.

The metal workers in March this year unleashed the most serious strike of the last 10 years. However, they suspended the strike for 43 days during which they finally reached an accord with the employers who promised to give them salary hikes of up to 63 percent.

However, the teachers of Brasilia were forced to suspend their 25-day strike yesterday without obtaining any of the economic and social demands they had posed. However, the suspension of the strike is only temporary because the teachers set 23 June as their deadline for the government to negotiate their demands, and if a satisfactory arrangement is not obtained they will resume the strike.

There are still some strikes both in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, but they are less significant and apparently easier to solve. Professors of private universities in Rio de Janeiro went on strike yesterday, demanding substantial wage increases. Sao Paulo has not yet found a final solution for the strike of public servants, even though certain sectors have decided to suspend the strike and return to work.

Other professional sectors of different states of the country continue demanding wage hikes above those established by the government, but without resorting to measures of force.

Union Intervention Ended

PY160316 Porto Alegre Radio Guaiba in Portuguese 0200 GMT 16 May 79 PY

[Text] The labor minister will be assigned to implement the presidential act whereby the intervention in the ABC unions in Sao Paulo is lifted and the leaders who were separated are replaced in their posts. According the press adviser's office, President Figueiredo considered the end of the intervention to be a gesture of goodwill on the part of the government to facilitate the understanding between labor and employers. The presidential press adviser said that the government has closely followed the events which marked the strike movement in Sao Paulo, and that it considers strike movements to be a democratic means to reach social equilibrium.

SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE ROLE IN STRIKES DECRIED

PY151357 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 13 May 79 p 10 PY

[Editorial: "Convergence of Radicals"]

[Text] The provocative presence and conspicuous participation of "persons and organizations which have nothing to do with the working class" in the strikes have been denounced by the labor minister who, in a televised speech, cited the Socialist Convergence as being dominant in picket lines at factory gates.

After reassuring the workers of the legitimate right to strike, the government publicly took an important step to outline legal boundaries and to expose the existence of foreign elements whose aim is none other than to disturb the orderly search for solutions. Since we are not completely under the effective guarantee of a democratic regime, there is excessive caution in denouncing those radical groups which are riding on the back of legitimate union movements.

It is impossible, however, to wait for the country to be fully normalized to expose to public opinion the existence of groups which are in fact not interested in that normalization. Liberalization cannot and must not provide impunity for those intent on disrupting it. The covert action of the members of the Socialist Convergence must be fully exposed so it can be neutralized through political clarification. The Brazilian Democratic Movement is also under obligation to immediately express its dissociation from political segments which are by far overstepping the limits of activities that can be allowed under the label of opposition since the radical militants are attacking the very foundations of the liberalization process.

The Socialist Convergence is a radical group organized under the shadows of Institutional Act No 5 and, aided by a system of arbitrary rules, managed to expand the scope of its capacity to mobilize. There is no doubt that this group is a point of convergence for various kinds of radicalism. Although it calls itself socialist, the group was not organized on the basis of ideas, nor has it demonstrated the minimum doctrinary knowledge to even pretend that it is at the service of socialism. The group is satisfied with the label, but reveals itself to be antidemocratic and radical in its aims, as attested to by the obviously provocative means of action it utilizes.

The capacity to cause social agitation and political disorder, far from being an attribute of socialist ideas, is characteristic of proven effectiveness in the hands of fascists of every stripe. The suspicious demands the Socialist Convergence makes--the creation of the National Student Union, the disruption of union activities, the promotion of incidents, in a nutshell, the intent to radicalize--are not meant as any serious contribution to shorten the transition period the country is going through to be able to enjoy democratic standards in the immediate future.

More rapidly than seemed necessary, the Brazilian Democratic Movement will have to sharpen its political personality by making internal definitions which this party is putting off to the detriment of its credibility in this liberalization phase. Because only sharpening that political personality will force those active within the Brazilian Democratic Movement under the label of "authentics," or any other label devoid of political content, to show their true face.

It would not be fair to group as leftists the entire range of radical elements who have not only intimidated the national democratic movements, but resort to provocations by taking over picket lines without carrying labor cards and showing up en masse in an assembly of bus drivers. They do not care about law or democracy because they are totalitarians who want to make decisions for others and file grievances which are none of their business.

It is time they are exposed to the judgment of the democratic conscience before they can succeed in their intent to disturb the country and keep the national democratic movement intimidated.

FOREIGN MINISTRY REJECTS PRESSURE FOR EXTRADITION

PY160136 Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PY

[Text] The Chilean Government has publicly rejected any pressure or threat concerning the extradition process. The Foreign Ministry has confirmed the decision not to accept any threat. In addition, Admiral Jose Toribio Merino has asserted that Chile will not tolerate any attempt at intervention in a matter dealing exclusively with the Judicial Branch. The government warned tonight that it does not accept, nor will it accept in the future, any threat against its sovereignty and national dignity.

In an official communique issued by the Foreign Ministry, the government answered the statement issued by the U.S. State Department concerning the situation arising from the extradition process. The request for the extradition of three officers of the Chilean Army has been denied by the Chilean Supreme Court president. In this regard, the Foreign Ministry has emphasized:

1. When the U.S. Government decided to submit this request to Chilean courts in accordance with national laws and norms set by the extradition treaty signed by the two governments in 1902, it recognized and accepted the competence of these judicial organs.

2. During this first phase of the process, the president of the Supreme Court, exercising his legal powers, issued a well-founded decision denying the extradition request. As a result, it is not for the Government of Chile, or any other, to try to intervene in the decisions of the judicial branch which, as a government organ, is independent and autonomous in its decision-making power. Moreover, it is intolerable and unacceptable that any effort toward intervention be made on the eve of an appeal to the decision.

3. This ministry also deems it appropriate to assert the following:

A. Chile's foreign policy is fundamentally based on respect for treaties, including the extradition treaty of 1902 signed with the United States.

B. Even though we should express our surprise and displeasure over the threatening style and tone of the (?reaction), we should point out that the U.S. Government, by announcing that it will appeal the decision, is reasserting its recognition of the competence of the Chilean courts.

4. An appropriate opportunity to put an end to all the discriminatory measures against Chile (?could) be provided by the consultations on bilateral relations for which Ambassador Landau has been called to Washington.

5. Moreover, the Chilean Government has the (?duty) to assert that it does not, nor will it in the future, accept any threat against its sovereignty and national dignity.

Merino Denounces Interference

PY160200 Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PY

[Excerpts] Government junta member Admiral Jose Toribid Merino has asserted that Chile is an independent nation, born free, as was demonstrated on 11 September, and will never accept the interference of anybody in our domestic affairs. Nobody can tell us what to do.

The commander in chief of the navy gave this warning in mentioning the decision of the Supreme Court president to reject the extradition request presented by the United States against these officers of the Chilean Army. The issue was discussed by the admiral during a ceremony in his honor organized by retired admirals and generals at the Military Club.

The naval chief emphasized that today there is a threat to the sovereignty of our nation. A country, because it feels it is big, wants to pressure us because Chilean courts denied its request for extradition. Sirs, he warned, nobody has made as many mistakes as he who once defended [words indistinct]. We Chileans have the courage in our blood to defy even the strongest. Today, as yesterday, we will defend our flag. Chile will continue to develop. We believe our policies to be just, and we will not accept the interference of anybody. Moreover, the judicial branch is independent, just and right, a model for the rest of the world. For this reason we reject the idea that any country, no matter how big and powerful it may be, should tell us how to be just. We will do things according to our laws.

Interior Minister's Comment

PY161256 Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 16 May 79 PY

[Text] Interior Minister Sergio Fernandez today dismissed the possibility that the refusal of Chile's Supreme Court to extradite three army officers could change the course of Chilean-U.S. relations.

"I hope not," the minister said in response to a request for his opinion of the affair and U.S. Ambassador Landau's trip to Washington.

When asked about the petitions submitted by Senator Edward Kennedy, Letelier's widow and Ronnie Moffit's widower to withdraw the U.S. ambassador in Chile because of the court's ruling, the interior minister stated that Senator Edward Kennedy's opinion is well known and in assessing his actions one must take into account his personality.

When this station asked him for an official statement about the court's ruling, the minister emphasized that, as the government and the president had repeatedly said, this is something which is being dealt with by the Judicial Branch, a branch which is fully independent of the executive and therefore the issue in question was purely a court matter.

MORE BOMBINGS REPORTED IN SANTIAGO, NO INJURIES

PY160257 Paris AFP in Spanish 1708 GMT 15 May 79 PY

[Text] Santiago, Chile, 15 May (AFP)--The Chilean police have reported that two high-intensity bombs exploded today in the eastern section of Santiago, without causing injuries. The first explosion destroyed some windows at the Banco Sudamericano in the Nunoa neighborhood, while the second bombing took place at a house located on Amerigo Vespucci Avenue. Several similar incidents took place in Santiago before 1 May and were attributed to the outlawed Movement of the Revolutionary Left.

BRIEFS

APRIL INFLATION RATE--Santiago, Chile, 4 May (AFP)--The National Statistics Institute reported that an inflation rate of 2.6 percent was registered here during the last month. Prices for consumers have increased by 9.6 percent in the last 4 months. The inflation rate in Chile reached 30.3 percent last year. [Paris AFP in Spanish 1549 GMT 4 May 79 PY]

BELGIUM'S PRINCE ALBERT DISCUSSES BILATERAL REALTIONS

PA151536 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpt] Belgium's Prince Albert, the most important individual to visit the country this year, admitted last night that relations between Colombia and his country were closer before World War II. His Royal Highness, brother of King Baudouin, (?said that he came) to Colombia to reactivate these relations because this continent, with which Belgium has so much affinity, is a natural partner for Europe, and Belgium would like to extend its cooperation in every field.

AMBASSADOR TO VENEZUELA HOPES FOR PROMPT AGREEMENT

PA151847 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Cornelio Reyes, thenew Colombian ambassador to Venezuela, has said he trusted there would be a prompt agreement between the two nations regarding delimitation of marine and submarine areas in the Gulf of Maracaibo. The diplomat spoke at the Tequendama Hotel during a farewell dinner given in his honor by part of the conservative national leadership which supports Alvaro Gomez Hurtado. Reyes said that Presidents Julio Cesar Turbay and Luis Herrera Campins both want to reach an agreement.

BORDER COMMISSION ESTABLISHED WITH VENEZUELA

PA151531 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] Colombia and Venezuela have set up a binational commission to study border problems occurring between Arauca Intendancy and Apure State. The disclosure was made by Arauca National Intendant Jose Maria Ruiz Merchan after he settled the incident involving the arrest of three Venezuelan soldiers in Colombian territory. The intendant said to this newscast:

[Begin Ruiz Merchan recording] One of the advantages that resulted from the negotiations [words indistinct] was to set up a sort of international tribunal. We noted that the 1941 treaty discusses, in detail, border integration in regard to services and commercial exchange. From this basis we can handle all kinds of conflicts--economic, social, borders, personal and so forth. So we think that in this way the consular burden, so to speak, is alleviated somewhat and conflicts can be settled on a valid, real and, especially, positive level for both countries. [end recording]

STUDY OF BORDER PROBLEMS WITH ECUADOR INITIATED

PA160436 Bogota Cadena Racial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--Colombia and Ecuador today started to study the problems affecting their border areas in an effort to solve them bilaterally. A meeting to this effect is being held in (Colcha). The Colombian delegation is headed by Eduardo Viesner Quran, director of national planning. Colombia will establish preliminary programs of action for the Narino and Putumayo regions and Ecuador will do the same for its border regions.

LABOR MINISTER COMMENTS ON MINIMUM WAGE DECREE RULING

PA120423 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 12 May 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--The government said today that the ruling by the Council of State annulling the decree which set the minimum wage in 1976 has no effect on the minimum wage which is currently in effect.

The emphatic statement was made by Labor Minister Rodrigo Marin Bernal, who said that there is no room for alarmist rumors. He also noted that the decree which set the present minimum wage of 3,450 pesos for urban employees and 3,150 pesos for rural workers is not covered by the ruling of the administrative disputes court. However, he said that if the action of the present government, which set the current minimum wages, is rejected by the top administrative disputes court, that decision would be immediately respected by the government which would proceed to summon the National Wage Council in order to fill the legal vacuum. The council would then start to review all the decrees that have set minimum wages over the past few years. There are four decrees in total. The labor minister reaffirmed that the recent ruling, which had not been reported to the government yet, has no effect in practice because it applies to a 1976 regulation which has already done its job.

ECOPETROL WORKERS SIGN COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

PA160429 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--The Colombian labor picture entered a true [word indistinct] phase today when the Colombian Petroleum Enterprise [ECOPETROL] and its workers signed a new labor agreement. The ECOPETROL labor problem had threatened the stability of the state-owned enterprise for 150 days. The collective agreement benefits 7,500 workers and represents a disbursement of 2 billion pesos which the state will have to pay the workers over the next 2 years.

Despite all of this, the workers labor union leaders expressed their dissatisfaction because they were not able to obtain the reinstatement of the coworkers who had been fired, which was included in the list of demands. We are pulling out of the country's labor problems, Labor Minister Rodrigo Marin Bernal said today. In referring to the signing of the collective agreement between ECOPETROL and its workers, he said that in this way the labor conflicts are being solved with a calm attitude.

GUERRILLA GROUP TAKES OVER HOUSING OFFICES, ESCAPES

PA160438 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--A guerrilla command took over the housing offices in the 7 August suburb today. The guerrillas stole 200,000 pesos and escaped in a yellow Chevrolet with black stripes on it. The police said that they beat several persons and chanted subversive slogans. Five men and two women participated in the attack.

MISSING STUDENT LOCATED AT ZIPAQUIRA BY DAS AGENTS

PA152321 Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 14 May 79 pp 1, 18A PA

[Excerpts] Student Hernando Benitez Lopez, whose disappearance brought about the occupation of the Tunja cathedral by nearly 200 students of the Pedagogic University, was detained last night by members of the Administrative Department of Security (DAS) in the Zipaguira District.

Benitez was seen at approximately 1900 as he prepared to send a telegram to Tunja addressed to his friend Ricardo Merran, the same person to whom he had sent a previous message from the same town and which gave DAS agents the first clue that he was in Cundinamarca District. The finding of the missing student puts an end to a number of stories circulated in connection with his disappearance and confirms the conclusions reached by DAS from the start--Benitez Lopez had gone to Zipaquira voluntarily to visit a small daughter whom he had not seen for 7 months.

RESERVES BANK PRESIDENT URGES CURB ON INFLATION

PA151323 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 5 May 79 p 2 PA

[Text] The primary and most urgent current national objective, after 10 months of having initiated the economic recovery program, is to stop inflation. The statement was made by the executive president of the Central Reserves Bank of Peru, Dr. Manuel Moreyra Loredo.

He asked the industrial sector to avoid indiscriminately increasing prices in an attempt to earn excessive profits which could lead to a dangerous decline in consumption and domestic commercial activities.

Dr Moreyra Loredo said inflation was gradually decreased, even though this improvement is not very evident yet. "The initial success achieved, however, must not tempt us to ease our efforts because there is still much more to do," he warned.

He then said that the domestic imbalance is the most serious problem confronting the Peruvian economy. He reiterated, however, that on the external front (concerning the balance of payments and trade balance) the progress is unquestionable.

The Central Reserves Bank president made these statements during a speech on the "Financial Projection Through 1979" given to the Institute of Financial and Administrative Executives of the Public and State-Participation Enterprises in a luncheon session at the Bolivar Hotel.

In his speech, which lasted over 2 hours, he indicated that the efforts to reduce the fiscal deficit are yielding good results. He mentioned that for the first time since 1972 there has been no need for external financing to cover the central government's current expenses and that this policy will be maintained throughout the year.

He said that the fourth payment of the debt contracted with the International Monetary Fund had been made yesterday. He added that 40 percent of the national budget will be assigned to make several pending payments, all of which are being paid on time.

BANK EMPLOYEES DEMAND REINSTATEMENT OF DISMISSED WORKERS

PA151237 Paris AFP in Spanish 1554 GMT 14 May 79 PA

[Text] Lima, 14 May (AFP)--Peruvian bank employees today called a surprise strike to demand the reinstatement of 57 of their colleagues dismissed 22 months ago. The Board of Directors of the Federation of Bank Employees, which groups 26,000 workers, said the strike will last the 4 hours they are open to the public and that they will renew their activities in the afternoon behind closed doors.

The board said that 2 of the 57 dismissed employees are still on a hunger strike demanding their reinstatement at the police hospital where they were taken from the Archbishop's Palace in this city when they began their fast on 2 May.

BRIEFS

ASSISTANCE AGAINST COFFEE RUST--Lima, 14 May (AFP)--The Andean group today granted $92,400 to Peru to help it fight coffee rust, which threatens to extend throughout the region. The assistance will finance 30 tons of copper oxychloride and equipment to spray plantations, as well as funds to install quarantine stations at the country's borders. Ecuador has taken strict control measures at its borders to keep the disease out of its territory, it was reported here. [Paris AFP in Spanish 2254 GMT 14 May 79 PA]

ENERGY MINISTRY REPORTS 1974-78 OIL PRICES

PA151244 Paris AFP in Spanish 0156 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] Caracas, 14 May (AFP)--The price of oil agreed upon by OPEC (the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries to which Venezuela and Ecuador belong) does not compensate the losses incurred by oil-producing countries due to currency fluctuations and international inflation, it was noted here today. A report by the Venezuelan Energy and Mines Ministry explains that in the past 5 years the country has lost over $3 million as a result of price increases on goods and services imported from the United States and the depreciation of the dollar.

Industrialized countries "hide the real price of oil and present its nominal value, without mentioning the deterioration resulting from the depreciation of the dollar or inflationary spirals to give the impression that, because of OPEC, the exporting countries have been increasing these prices annually." The report added that in times of crisis, such as the international crisis earlier this year following the incidents in Iran, the marketing transnationals and not the exporting states were the principal beneficiaries. In view of this international monetary disruption and unchecked inflation in the principal industrialized countries, which "results in great harm to developing countries," OPEC is studying remedial measures.

Rise in Oil Market Premium

PA151330 Paris AFP in English 0644 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Caracas, May 14 (AFP)--Venezuela will raise its market premium for its oil by 60 to 80 U.S. cents a barrel within the next two weeks, official sources said here today, confirming reports circulating in New York oil circles. The increase will make the premium about two dollars a barrel, raising the average price of Venezuelan crude to more than 18 dollars a barrel. The average price for oil set by OPEC is 16.54 dollars a barrel. The market premium is an additional charge levied by oil exporting countries depending on how close their main customers are. It is intended to reflect the lower transportation costs to such markets.

OFFICIAL SOURCES REJECT CRITICISM OF OPEC MEMBERS

PA151243 Paris AFP in Spanish 1936 GMT 14 May 79 PA

[Excerpt] Caracas, May (AFP)--Official sources rejected here today criticism voiced by Colombia and Central American nations against Venezuela and other members of OPEC at the UNCTAD meeting in Manila. According to the sources, quoted by VENPRES, the criticism "is irrelevant because OPEC is already drafting the proper mechanisms to resolve the situation." Colombia and Central American nations had asked UNCTAD to include on its agenda the poor countries' problem with the rising cost of oil imports. The Venezuelan sources noted that the implementation of measures to contribute to solve this problem is one of the basic objectives of the trip of Venezuelan Mines and Energy Minister Humberto Calderon Berti through seven countries of the Middle East and North Africa that are members of OPEC.

BRIEFS

OUTGOING ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR--President Luis Herrera Campins received outgoing Romanian Ambassador Petrache Danila who is ending his mission here. During the meeting "stress was laid on the Romanian-Venezuelan relations of friendship and collaboration and on the great possibilities existing for their development and diversification on multiple planes" and a desire was expressed "to firmly act for the attainment of common objectives set by the two countries." [Bucharest AGERPRES in English 0905 GMT 14 May 79 PY]

FIDEL CASTRO'S VISIT TO COZUMEL REPORTED

FL151316 Merida Radio Yucatan Network in Spanish 1245 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] According to an announcement made yesterday by the Foreign Relations Secretariat, Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Council of State and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, will arrive on Thursday 17 May in Cozumel [Mexico] for a 2-day official visit. This will be the first official visit made by Castro to Mexico in reciprocity for the visit made by former President Luis Echeverria in April 1976 to Havana, Cuba.

COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT TO VISIT MEXICO ON 18 MAY

PA150342 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0243 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 14 May (EFE)--Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo will arrive somewhere in the Mexican Caribbean on Sunday, 20 May, the presidency of the republic has officially reported. The Costa Rican president's visit will coincide with the one that Cuban Council of State President Fidel Castro will make on 17 and 18 May. Fidel Castro will arrive at the Caribbean island of Cozumel on the 17th.

PEMEX DENIES CRUDE EXPORTS AFFECTED BY PORT PROBLEMS

PA121558 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0828 GMT 9 May 79 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 9 May (EFE)--Mexican Petroleum (PEMEX) has assured that there is no danger that port problems will reduce crude exports, a local newspaper has reported. PEMEX had already rejected on Monday a U.S. story indicating that technical problems would prevent PEMEX from fulfilling its crude exportation contracts.

A PEMEX spokesman told EFE that there is nothing in the way to keep PEMEX from meeting its exportation contracts. He added that the newspaper report lacked any foundation. He reported that PEMEX is currently producing 1,553,240 barrels a day, in accordance with its program, and that it is exporting a little over 530,000 barrels, also in agreement with its foreign sales plan.

The newspaper UNO MAS UNO had reported that in a study carried out by PEMEX, a copy of which was handed over to members of a U.S. congressional commission which visited Mexico, it was stated that within 6 months crude exports would be affected by port problems. According to the UNO MAS UNO report, which PEMEX duly rejected, exports to some clients who are already under contract could drop from 15 to 25 percent.

BRIBING OF CONASUPO OFFICIALS TO BE INVESTIGATED

FL151411 Merida Radio Yucatan Network in Spanish 1245 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] The Attorney General's Office has announced that it is investigating a series of bribes given by North American enterprises to the government Basic Commodities Corporation--CONASUPO--in which officials responsible for buying and selling grains are involved. Large profits were made by these acts because the purchases made were at prices that were higher than what were available in the international grain market at the time of the operation.

BRIEFS

NEW CONASUPO DIRECTOR--Enrique Diaz Ballesteros has been appointed director of the government Basic Commodities Corporation [CONASUPO]. He was introduced yesterday to CONASUPO's employees. [Mexico City International Service in Spanish 0315 GMT 9 May 79 PA]

COSTA RICA

PRESIDENT TO MEET SUNDAY WITH MEXICAN PRESIDENT

PA151936 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1716 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] San Jose, 15 May (ACAN-EFE)--Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo Odio and Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo will meet Sunday in Cancun, a tourist center in Quintana Roo State, Mexico. Official sources indicated this morning that the Mexican Government has announced that the meeting will be held at 1000 (1600 GMT). Preparations for this trip had been underway for weeks, but it was unexpectedly announced today that the meeting would be held Sunday even though the possibility had been mentioned earlier that it might be held in late May on Cozumel Island, Yucatan Peninsula, in the Caribbean.

Carazo wants the Mexican Government's support either in the form of oil or of cooperation in the area of oil exploration in Costa Rica. Carazo's agenda also includes discussion of the defense of tuna resources, international action promoted by these two governments last year in order to create a Latin American bloc for this purpose. Carazo's party will include Foreign Minister Rafael Angel Calderon, Finance Minister Hernan Saenz, Public Works and Transportation Minister Rodolfo Mendez, political adviser Julio Rodriguez and Costa Rican Oil Refinery President Fernando Ortuno. The meeting will not extend beyond Sunday.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PICKET SALVADORAN CONSULATE

PA151920 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1630 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Members of the Socialist Workers Organization [Organizacion Socialista de los Trabajadores--OST] are picketing the Salvadoran Consulate. The OST members are protesting the political situation in that fraternal Central American country, particularly recent asssassinations. The OST members are carrying placards with slogans against the Salvadoran military regime. The group has been in front of the consulate for the past 30 minutes. No violence has been reported so far.

MINISTER ON PLAN TO REORGANIZE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

PA151924 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1630 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Justice Minister Elizabeth Odio Benito confirmed this morning a report which we published yesterday regarding new provisions of the public administration law that, beginning on Thursday, meetings of the Council of Government will be devoted to preparation of the new administration structure of the executive branch. In answer to a question regarding the application of articles 47 and 48 of the public administration law, Minister Odio Benito confirmed that there will be changes and transfers within the present vice ministries since the law now permits only one such official [presumably per ministry]. The minister emphasized, however, that the changes involve administration rather than personnel.

Asked about charges of illegality in two specific cases in the Ministries of Finance and Justice, the minister answered jokingly that there will be some positions open at the vice ministerial level. The status of the two vice ministers involved will indeed be studied to determine how their functions will be redistributed. The vice minister of finance is economist Leonel Baruch, who is only 23 years old. The vice minister of justice is Father Alberto (Izaguirre). The law prescribes that the former should at least 30 years of age, while in the second case, it requires that he be a layman.

SANDINIST GUERRILLAS TO BE DEPORTED TO PANAMA

PA152004 Paris AFP in Spanish 1905 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] San Jose, 15 May (AFP)--Seven Nicaraguan Sandinist National Liberation Front guerrillas who were arrested while undergoing training at a farm outside San Jose will be deported to Panama in the next few days, it was reported today. The guerrillas are Tomas Milina Espinoza (head of the group), Benito Sanchez, Alberto Osorio, Federico Rivera, Santiago Perez, Pancho Hernandez and Roberto Borel. They surrendered without putting up resistance even though they were heavily armed. The guerrillas, who said that they had been in training for several weeks on the farm, will be charged with unlawful association and illegal possession of arms.

Sandinist Account of Activities

PA151538 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] One of the Sandinists arrested yesterday afternoon by a unit of rural assistance guards from Grecia reported that his group had arrived at the estate in La Garita, where 7 others had also been arrested by agents of the Judicial Investivation Organization, 2 days ago. The Sandinist added that they had entered Costa Rican territory 1 month ago, but because of lack of familiarity with the area, they became lost. He said they had tried to avoid being seen until they arrived in the capital for fear of being reported to Somoza agents whom they claim are operating in our country.

According to the youths, the group of at least 11 Sandinists [numbers as heard] do not come from the same battlefront; they come from different Nicaraguan cities. It was learned a few minutes ago that the patrols which had been sent to the area of La Garita have been returned to their various headquarters, suspending the search for the Sandinists, which was to be resumed early this morning. This decision was reached because of the heavy rain which fell in the area yesterday as well as to bolster the confidence of the guerrillas, who are fearful that they may be met with gunfire. The idea is for them to seek refuge in homes where they can receive attention. [passage as heard]

GOVERNMENT FIGURES ON COST OF LIVING REFUTED

PA160113 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 PA

[Text] The cost of living has in reality increased by 8.51 percent. It is not true, as the government has stated, that the cost of living has only increased by 5.15 percent. Statistics clearly show that the cost of living has increased by 8.51 percent, the Costa Rican educators union has stated. The union has indicated that as long as the government maintains its position of increasing wages by 200 colones, there is no possibility of continuing negotiations because the cost of living has increased excessively.

EL SALVADOR

FURTHER REPORTAGE ON EMBASSIES: VIOLENCE CONTINUES

Venezuelan Conditions Made

PA160244 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2106 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpt] Caracas, 15 May (EFE)--The Venezuelan Government today demanded the safety of its embassy personnel in San Salvador, which is now in the hands of a group of guerrillas, as an indispensable condition to vacate [as received] it. According to Venezuela's official news agency, the other two conditions which Venezuela demanded from the Salvadoran Government are support for the Venezuelan negotiator and proper consideration for the Venezuelan Government's concern over the problem.

'Ultraleftist Plot' Denounced

PA151231 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0136 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpt] San Salvador, 14 May (ACAN-EFE)--The Salvadoran Government today denounced an ultraleftist plot aimed at violent seizing political power, according to documents confiscated by the authorities. During a news conference, Defense and Public Security Minister Gen Federico Castillo Yanes said that the current wave of violence in the country is being promoted by Marxist-Leninists whose orders here and everywhere else follow the same pattern and vary only according to the country chosen for the plan of subversion, sedition and terrorism.

The minister explained that the instructions received and executed by those ultraleft groups include continously provoking armed confrontations with the authorities, holding public demonstrations with infiltrated agitators and making use of all types of propaganda to discredit the government. "When they exhaust those means," General Castillo added, "they resort to direct action such as occupation of embassies, machinegunning of houses of public officials or employees, and killing of security agents in order to create a climate of uncertainty leading to institutional anarchy." The Salvadoran defense minister indicated that those who obey the orders undertake their "criminal actions using young students, women and even children as a screen in order to produce scapegoats, that is, to create martyrs who will be useful for them in their propaganda here and abroad."

Further on Castillo Remarks

PA151233 Paris AFP in Spanish 0318 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 14 May (AFP)--The army supports Salvadoran President Carlos Humberto Romero in his struggle against subversion, Defense Minister Federico Castillo said today. The minister was accompanied by the other members of the armed forces high command during his meeting with newsmen. Without mentioning any country by name but obviously referring to Cuba, the minister said that "the instructions to provoke agitation in Central America stem from foreign countries. This agitation is taken from one country to the other trying to find the right climate in some of the countries to sow uncertainty and foment anarchy."

BPR Leader Guardado Interview

PA151213 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1645 GMT 14 May 79 PA

[Excerpt] Mexico City, 14 May (DPA)--Facundo Guardado y Guardado, top leader of the People's Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), has told a Mexican newspaper that the Salvadoran people are waging war against the military regime and that they will seek change with arms in hand. Guardado y Guardado, who was released by the government last week in response to a demand of the brigade members who are occupying the cathedral and the French and Venezuelan embassies, was interviewed by a correspondent of Mexico City's EXCELSIOR inside the San Salvador cathedral, which has been turned into the BPR leader's center of operations.

The Salvadoran people have begun a prolonged war and we will not stop until we establish a people's socialist government which insures bread and human dignity for Salvadorans, Guardado said. He is secretary general of the BPR, a front which unites several peasant, labor and student organizations. The brigade leader said only 14 families dominate El Salvador and earn billions while 98 percent of the population who are exploited at work obtain only about $0.50 a day. We will stage strikes at the factories and stoppages in the fields. We will use weapons to insure bread and human dignity for Salvadorans in the face of repression and the military dictatorship, he said.

Costa Rican Consulate Bombed

PA151547 Paris AFP in Spanish 1519 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 15 May (AFP)--Terrorists this morning attacked the Costa Rican Consulate in Santa Ana, located 64 km west of this capital. Consul Roberto Reyes, who is also president of the Santa Ana Red Cross, reported that several individuals identifying themselves as members of the self-styled Popular Liberation Forces (FPL), a clandestine group, placed five bombs at the consulate doors. Four of the five bombs exploded, causing considerable property damage but no casualties. It was noted here that by this action the FPL seeks to support the People's Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), which is at present waging a public struggle against Gen Carlos Humberto Romero's government

Soyapango Violence; Women's Protest

PA151810 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1722 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Soyapango, El Salvador, 15 May (ACAN-EFE)--Members of the People's Revolutionary Bloc (BPR) clashed violently today with revenue police in this city located 7 km east of San Salvador. For the moment it is not known whether there were any fatalities or how many persons were injured. Eyewitnesses told ACAN-EFE that there was heavy shooting and that all houses and businesses were closed and have remained that way. According to unofficial reports, BPR members were marching toward the Soyapango church, which is occupied by activists of that leftist group demanding the release of several of their leaders, when police units appeared suddenly and violence erupted. Thousands of persons, including students, housewives, workers and businessmen, have been trapped in several places. Red Cross units have been trying unsuccessfully to enter the area of the shooting, which is occupied by the revenue police. Meanwhile, tension continues to prevail in the capital, San Salvador, where women dressed in mourning have begun a protest march over what they describe as the 8 May massacre at the cathedral. On that date some 20 persons were killed and over 50 others were shot.

HONDURAS

COSTA RICAN CONSULATE ATTACKED; CONSUL INJURED

PA151754 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1600 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] Tegucigalpa, 15 May (ACAN-EFE)--Yolanda Cosse Quiroz, Costa Rica's consul in San Pedro Sula, northern Honduras, was seriously injured on Sunday when two men attacked the consulate and beat her severely. News of the attack was not learned until today, Tuesday, in this capital because the consul remained unconscious for several hours and it was not until later that her neighbors took her to the hospital. According to the consul, her attackers, who had Nicaraguan accents, had requested documents to enter Costa Rica alleging that they lived in Nicaragua but had left without documents due to their country's difficult situation.

According to the consul, the two attackers--one of them blond, the other with a swarthy complexion--began talking about Nicaragua's political situation. Afterwards, they raised the volume of her stereo, beat her until she was unconscious and then robbed her. Inside the consulate they painted slogans on the walls stating, "Somoza yes, dirty Costa Ricans no." For this reason, the consul believes the two men were Nicaraguan Government agents or sympathizers displeased with Costa Rica's stand on Gen Anastasio Somoza Debayle's regime. The Honduran police have remained silent regarding this attack on the Costa Rican Consulate in San Pedro Sula and it is believed here that the Costa Rican Foreign Ministry will issue an official protest.

NICARAGUA

FSLN WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH ANTI-SOMOZA SECTORS

PA151745 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] The Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) is willing to start negotiations with political sectors in Nicaragua which are fighting against Gen Anastasio Somoza's government to restore peace promptly and end the bloodbath. Tomas Borge said that they will not [word indistinct] weapons, but that they advocate a national government made up of all representative forces of the country which are fighting against Somoza's forces. Borge said that the National Guard is entering the phase of decomposition. He added that one manifestation of this is the lack of seriousness in its information releases. He said that [chief of National Guard Legal and Public Relations Office] Aranda Escobar gave completely false reports on the confrontations in Nueva Guinea. He gave an as-yet-unspecified number of casualties among the army and mentioned only four Sandinists killed. Borge, one of the main leaders of the guerrilla organization, talked to one of our reporters from Nicaragua and said that the FSLN has always acted in accordance with its well-thought-out goals as established by distinguished intellectuals within the FSLN. He said that the FSLN's goal has never been to kill or torture and that it has always respected high schools and the Red Cross.

FSLN BEGINS OFFENSIVE IN MASAYA

PA151903 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1848 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 15 May (ACAN-EFE)--At least five cars, most of them taxis, were allegedly burned today in the eastern Nicaraguan city of Masaya after the Sandinist National Liberation Front unleashed a new political and military offensive. It was reported that the Sandinist forces began harassing Masaya military authorities at 1000 (1500 GMT). The actions immediately halted activities in the city, which is 30 km east of the capital.

Persons arriving in Masaya from other Nicaraguan cities could not enter the town due to the new Sandinist operation. Telephone communications with Masaya have been cut, and people cannot leave the city for security reasons. Around noon today shooting was heard in La Reforma, Santa Rosa and Paises Bajos districts south of Masaya. It was also reported that the heaviest rebel contingent was in the indian neighborhood of Monimbo. A military plane has been flying over Masaya on a reconnaisance operation.

Masaya Garrison, Banks Attacked

PA151819 Paris AFP in Spanish 1739 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 15 May (AFP)--Sandinist guerrillas, who this morning laid siege to the army command post in Masaya, began withdrawing today at noon. Three army bombers flew over the city in an attempt to locate the guerrilla positions shortly before the guerrillas began withdrawing toward the east and north. The Sandinists used numerous antitank rockets in their attack on the Masaya headquarters, located 30 km east of Managua.

While this attack was being carried out, other Sandinist groups assaulted the city's two largest banks. According to initial reports, three soldiers were killed. There has been no report on the number of Sandinist casualties.

REACTION TO FORTHCOMING CASTRO-LOPEZ PORTILLO MEETING

PA152233 Paris AFP in Spanish 2020 GMT 15 May 79 PA

[Excerpts] Havana, 15 May (AFP)--Used to state secrets, the residents of Havana assimilated without comment today the surprising news that President Fidel Castro will leave for Mexico within 48 hours. While Cuban circles carried out their daily activities as if nothing had occurred, the embassies were busy making conjectures about the possible subjects Castro and President Jose Lopez Portillo will discuss. GRANMA, the only newspaper that circulates in Havana and the organ of the Communist Party, published on its front page the brief official communique announcing the trip. The communique does not disclose the agenda of the presidents' meeting.

His return, which Castro is now making for other reasons and objectives, will presumably be similarly surrounded by secrecy. If the tradition of recent years is followed, only at the last minute will one know if Castro will travel by ship or plane and by what route. Official circles who were consulted said they did not know details of the organization of the trip or of the program of activities. Diplomats and analysts can therefore only conjecture about the subjects to be discussed by Castro and Lopez Portillo. It is believed that the discussions will go beyond the framework of bilateral relations.

Without ruling out that they will discuss Cuban-U.S. relations, it is believed that it is very unlikely that they will be the main point of the talks in view of Castro's refusal to accept mediators in his relations with the United States. It is believed that Castro's interest will lie in consolidating with Lopez Portillo the image of "a responsible and mature Latin American policy" of coexistence without giving up principles and which will, at the same time, involve cordial relations and good commercial affairs. Another interest of Castro on Cozumel will apparently be to brief Lopez Portillo on details of the nonalined summit scheduled to be held in Havana in September since Mexico participates in the nonalined movement as an observer.

INTERCOSMOS WORKING GROUP MEETING ENDS IN HAVANA

FL152223 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2207 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Excerpt] The working sessions of the fifth meeting of the socialist countries Intercosmos program's working group on the probing of earth from space concluded today. This international meeting was held in our capital with the participation of the delegations from Bulgaria, Hungary, GDR, Cuba, Poland, Romania, Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

The results of work done last year were examined at the meeting. This work was concerned with the study of the earth's natural resources, creation of necessary equipment for aerial and space surveys and the technical means to process the obtained information on earth. Work plans for next year and the 1981-85 period also were drafted taking into account scientific and economic interests of the participating countries. Since 1975 when the working group for the probing of earth from space was established, our country has been participating actively in the research work which the socialist nations are doing in this field.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA DEPUTY PREMIER DISCUSSES RELATIONS

FL142006 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1938 GMT 14 May 79 FL

[Excerpts] Matej Lucan, member of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and deputy premier of the government of the socialist republic of the fraternal country, at noon today held a press conference at the Culture Ministry in Havana.

During his news conference at the culture Ministry, the Czechoslovak deputy premier referred to the 1981-85 5-year plan of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. In this regard, he said he expected that agreements and protocols during that 5-year period will strengthen cultural ties between Cuba and his country even more, in keeping with two socialist countries that maintain very close ties.

Visit to Union Offices

FL160039 Havana Domestic Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 May 79 FL

[Text] The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic delegation that is in Havana on the occasion of the days of culture of the fraternal country in Cuba this afternoon visited the offices of the National Cultural Workers Union at the Central Organization of Cuban Workers--CTC. Jacinto Viamontes, secretary general of that union, welcomed the distinguished visitors and briefed them on the work undertaken by the union. Matej Lucan, chief of the Czechoslovak delegation and member of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee, then spoke stressing the experiences they have gained in Cuba. He said their visit has given them the opportunity to know our country better.

MEETING WITH YUGOSLAV, CZECHOSLOVAK ENVOYS

FL152157 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2130 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado, member of the PCC Central Committee Politburo and vice president of the Council of Ministers, has received Zivouin Jazic, ambassador of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere and dealt with the development of bilateral relations between the two countries. They also discussed foreign policy matters, especially concerning the sixth summit conference of the nonalined countries movement.

Dorticos Torrado also received Milos Vojta, ambassador of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The meeting with the Czechoslovak ambassador was conducted in a fraternal atmosphere in keeping with the level of relations between the two countries' parties and governments. They examined the satisfactory status of the existing multifarious bilaterial relations. They also exchanged viewpoints on current international problems and development of the socialist countries and of the international communist movement.

RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ RECEIVES ITALIAN OFFICIAL

FL15144 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1248 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] Eng (Nicola Turarelli), management representative of the Italian Fiat group, has paid a courtesy call on Dr Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice president of the Councils of State and Ministers. Mr (Tufarelli) is in our country to meet with Cuban organizations.

AFGHAN WOMEN'S DELEGATION TOURS SANTIAGO

FL141349 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1212 GMT 14 May 79 FL

[Text] (Delora Manhap), president of the Women's Organization of the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and the delegation she heads have met in Santiago de Cuba with members of the Federation of Cuban Woman--FMC--provincial leadership. At the meeting Isabel Jomarron, secretary general of the Santiago de Cuba [Province] FMC, explained the FMC's structure and operations and pointed out the important contributions made by Cuban women to the economic development of the country.

(Delora Manhap) stated that the experiences obtained will aid in supporting the work done by the women in her country and she praised the friendship existing between the peoples of Cuba and Afghanistan. On their tour of Santiago de Cuba [Province] the Afghan women's delegation have visited the Siboney farm, the 26 July museum in the former Moncada barracks and the house where Antonio Maceo lived.

Tour of Isle of Youth

FL151516 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1249 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] A delegation from the Women's Organization of the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has toured sites of historical and education interests in the [Isle of Youth] special municipality. The delegation is headed by (Delora Manhap), president of the Afghan Women's Organization.

PEREZ HERRERO CLOSES CULTURE WORKER PLENUM

FL141742 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 14 May 79 FL

[Text] Antonio Perez Herrero, member of the PCC Secretariat, has called on the culture trade union cadres to reject conformity, superficiality and routine activities and to undertake every task carefully, honestly and modestly. Perez Herrero closed the first plenum of this sector which was held at the Lazaro Pena Trade Union Cadre School located in Havana City. In another part of his remarks he said that artists and newsmen are a notable and very important sector of the workers because they are responsible for increasing and improving culture in the socialist society and they are in the front ranks of the ideological struggle.

ALMEIDA TOURS GRANMA ECONOMIC, SOCIAL PROJECTS

FL152107 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2038 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida Bosque, member of the PCC Politburo and vice president of the Council of State, has toured several economic and social projects under construction in Granma Province. Accompanying the revolution's leader were PCC Central Committee members Emilio Loo Hernandez, party first secretary in Granma Province, and Lino Carreras Rodriguez. Almeida and those accompanying him visited the rock crusher in Caco, Jiguani, which is under construction at a cost of 16 million pesos. With a production of 1.2 million cubic meters yearly, this plant will supply the five eastern provinces. They also visited the sugar mill under construction at Rio Cauto, the 630-bed hospital in Manzanillo, one airport and a soft drink plant which will produce 7,000 boxes per 8-hour shift.

BRIEFS

CIEGO DE AVILA AIRPORT--The construction projects at the site of the Ciego de Avila Province Airport, which is valued at over 10 million pesos, has begun. The airport is located between the municipalities of Ciego de Avila and Ciro Redondo, near the Cebanos citrus fields. In the first stage the airport will have a 2,600 meter runway. Later it will be lengthened to 3,500 meters, which will place it in the international airport category. [Text] [Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 15 May 79 FL]

HAVANA MILK PRODUCTION--The Havana Province dairy industry produced 62.2 million liters of milk during the first quarter of 1979, which is an increase of 10 million liters in comparison with the same period in 1978. Between January and March the Havana Province milk production plan was fulfilled by 103 percent. [Text] [Havana Domestic in Spanish 1600 GMT 15 May 79 FL]

GUZMAN WILL NOT DISCLOSE PREVIOUS REGIME'S CORRUPTION

FL152334 Santo Domingo Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] President Antonio Guzman today announced in Moca that the government will not authorize its officials to disclose the actions of corruption in which the previous government headed by Dr Joaquin Balaguer was involved. When asked about it, the chief of staff replied that it is not a matter of controversy and insults. He said that the ruling Dominican Revolutionary Party [PRD] is a party of peace and harmony.

Vice President Jacobo Majluta recently expressed disgust over statements made by the former Dominican president. He indicated that if President Guzman authorizes it, he is prepared to disclose the acts of corruption by the previous government in each of the enterprises of the Corporation of State Enterprises, of which Majluta is director general.

Pena Gomez Vows Revelations

FL152342 Santo Domingo Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] The various government institutions of the Dominican Republic are preparing to make public the horrible things which officials of the previous Balaguer regime did in state agencies. Dr Jose Francisco Pena Gomez made this statement this afternoon over the official organ of his party.

The secretary general and maximum leader of the PRD said that the abnormalities and corruption during the past Reformist Party administration will be disclosed with every detail. Dr Pena Gomez made the announcement when he spoke on the Tribuna Democratica [radio] program in reply to criticism of the PRD government by former President Joaquin Balaguer. The PRD secretary general said the government of President Antonio Guzman has encountered impediments because of Dr Balaguer's machinations.

PRESIDENT: NO POLITICS ALLOWED IN ARMED FORCES

FL152354 Santo Domingo Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 May 79 FL

[Text] The Dominican Government will not, under any circumstance, allow the country's military forces to be involved in politics, President Antonio Guzman said in Moca today.

The nation's chief executive said the military institutions of the Dominican Republic must be strengthened. Antonio Guzman also called for greater institutionalization of the armed forces, stressing that they must be apolitical and not involved in partisanship. "In my government I will not, under any circumstance, allow the military to be involved in politics, President Guzman emphasized. He added that in this way the armed forces will be increasingly solid and acquire greater strength to fulfill their historic mission, which is to safeguard national sovereignty.

ANTIGUA

DEPUTY PREMIER EXPLAINS POSITION ON GRENADA

FL111415 Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 7 May 79 p 10 FL

[Text] St. John's Sun--Antigua's Deputy Premier Lester Bird has emphasised here that his decision not to sit with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) sister state Grenada at a regional meeting in Barbados last week, was not a personal one, but was based on a decision taken by the West Indies Associated States (WISA) last month and on a sound principle that the Antigua Government stood for.

Bird, who is also economic development minister, had refused to enter the morning session of a regional meeting Friday, that was considering the future of the Caribbean Investment Corporation, (CIC) because a representative from the revolutionary government in Grenada was present. The deputy premier recalled that at the meeting here was March 20, the WISA Council of Ministers had decided that they could not recognise the Grenada Government that had come to power in a coup d'etat seven days earlier.

Mr. Bird said that he was "shocked and surprised" when his colleagues decided to sit with the Grenada representatives at the Barbados meeting. He said that Antigua stood for a principle that it could not condone coups for fear that a precedent may be set, giving organisations the right to take governments by force of arms.

Mr. Bird was obviously very disappointed when he discovered that some other WISA ministers had gone into the meeting, despite their March 20 decision. He immediately dispatched a message to the governments of St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Vincent and Montserrat, the Caribbean Development Bank, the WISA executive secretary, and the Government of Grenada. The message said Antigua viewed the Barbados action by some of the WISA governments as an abdication of the principle of regional decision-making, which was severely damaging to the credibility of the WISA Council.

Mr. Bird had added: "In these circumstances, while continuing to condemn the method by which the Grenada regime assumed office, Antigua is forced to now reserve the right to sit in regional organisations with the Grenada Government to deal with specific matters related to the advancement of Antigua." (CANA)

GRENADA

SIZE OF MILITARY BUILDUP BEING KEPT SECRET

FL141815 Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 14 May 79 p 1 FL

[Excerpt] The size of Grenada's People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) and militia now reportedly in training in the Spice Island is being kept a secret.

Mr Maurice Bishop, the Grenada prime minister, declined to give any details of the operations for what he termed "security reasons."

Mr Bishop, in a telephone interview with the "GUARDIAN" on Wednesday, spoke of Grenada's defence plans, but did not give any details of the amount of arms or number of personnel involved in the exercises. He did not state who were carrying out the training exercises.

Although denying reports that there is a military and arms buildup, he had explained that countries in the region had reacted positively to the island's requests for assistance, including military assistance.

Reports circulating in the region since the March 13 coup in Grenada which toppled former Prime Minister Sir Eric Gairy claim that Cuba had reacted favourably to the Bishop regime's request for military assistance. The reports claimed that the Cubans had supplied arms and hundreds of personnel in addition to military equipment including vehicles.

In the interview, Mr. Bishop did not deny that the Cubans had supplied any military assistance, but while explaining that some of the countries approached had given assistance, he said that assistance was given in "all forms" after he had earlier explained that the aid requested included technical, economic and military. But he denied that there were thousands of Cubans in the country.

No official Request

According to government officials yesterday the Trinidad and Tobago Government has not yet received any official request from the Grenada Government for talks.

Prime Minister Bishop is seeking talks with Trinidad.

Officials at the Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment.

JAMAICA

PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINS CUBAN DONATION OF NINE SCHOOLS

FL121545 Kingston DAILY GLEANER in English 9 May 79 p 10 FL

[Text] The Government of Cuba has decided to donate nine special physical education and sports training centres to be sited throughout the country.

This was announced yesterday by Prime Minister The Hon. Michael Manley at the official opening of the international seminar on physical education and sport at the Pegasus Hotel in Kingston. Mr Manley said the nine centres would be built instead of the two specialized high schools for students with special talent in sports, which had originally been promised by the Cuban Government.

He explained that this decision had been reached after re-examination of the offer, since the Jamaican Government felt it would be better to use the resources in a manner that would allow more people to benefit from the facilities. The exact location of the centres is to be decided, Mr. Manley said, and added that this further assistance from Cuba would make a tremendous contribution to the national participatory policy in sports.

Addressing himself specifically to the question of overseas assistance to Jamaica, the prime minister said that like most small developing countries, Jamaica has been a beneficiary of many assistance schemes from countries like Britain, the United States, Canada, Holland, Norway, Germany, France, Venezuela and so on.

This assistance had been received in a spirit of appreciation and in recognition of the international solidarity which promoted the aid, Mr. Manley said.

He went on to say that in more recent times, Jamaica had received assistance from the Governments of Cuba and the Soviet Union and added that it was a very sad commentary on the attitudes of some Jamaicans that they were happy to receive aid from countries like the United States, Canada and Britain, but for their own backward reasons, chose to discredit aid that came from Cuba and the Soviet Union.

MANLEY SETS FORTH HIS POSITION ON IMPERIALISM

FL121600 Kingston DAILY GLEANER in English 9 May 79 pp 1, 15 FL

[Text] Concern about certain aspects of the "anti-imperialism" resolution adopted by the Portland Parish Council last month has been expressed by Prime Minister Michael Manley.

Jamaica House yesterday released a copy of a letter from the prime minister to the mayor of Port Antonio, Councillor Conrad Francis. Jamaica House said Mr. Manley's letter, dated May 3, was released yesterday after the publication of the Parish Council's resolution in the GLEANER yesterday. The text of Mr. Manley's letter is as follows:

"Dear Comrade Francis,

"I have just received a copy of the resolution moved by the Portland Parish Council on April 12, I have today written to the secretary of the Parish Council, Miss Innerarity, a simple acknowledgement. In the meantime, I am writing to you directly as the leader of the PNP [People's National Party] group of councillors in the Portland Parish Council and as chairman of the Councillors' Caucus.

"I am very concerned about certain aspects of this resolution. Whereas I appreciate the many kind things that were said about the efforts of the government in the struggle against imperialism and for the replacement of that economic system with a new international economy order, and whereas I also appreciate the support expressed for the visit to the Soviet Union and for the diversification of our trade links, I must nonetheless draw to attention certain respects in which I do not agree with the resolution.

"In drawing these to attention, I am mindful of the fact that certain elements in the Jamaican society who support the imperialist economic system in the world, and who are bitterly opposed to all those who struggle to change it, have done everything in their power to create an atmosphere of hysteria and confusion about the visit to the Soviet Union. I also understand that hysterical behaviour of this kind tends to breed an atmosphere in which others over-react as they seek to defend the causes which are dear to them. Nonetheless, I must warn that these human reactions must be strictly controlled at all times and that the policies of the government are very clear in certain respects which do not accord with the terms of the resolution.

"Firstly, the government is struggling in concert with others to change the world economic system which is presently dominated by imperialism and to replace this with a new international economic order. However, the government does not identify imperialism with any one particular country, but regards it as a worldwide system.

"At the same time, the government has a non-aligned policy in which we seek to maintain friendly relations with the government and people of any country that treats us with friendship and respect for our sovereignty. Secondly, the resolution speaks of the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica and the Jamaica Manufacturers' Association as 'puppets' of imperialism.

"In stating the position in this way, the resolution seems to suggest that all members o of the Private Sector Organization and the Jamaica Manufacturers Association have this attitude. This accusation is contrary to fact. There are certain elements in both these organizations who have clearly acted in a manner that marks them as favouring the maintenance of the imperialist system in the world. These elements have been consistently hostile to everything that this government has tried to do.

"On the other hand, it is not true of all members of either organization. In addition, the policy of the People's National Party, upon which government policies are based, calls for the development of a mixed economy and for co-operative relations between the private sector and the government. At this very moment, a substantial measure of co-operation has been forthcoming as we work towards the development of a social contract.

"I suggest that the caucus meet and discuss my comments with a view to determining an appropriate course of action."

ST LUCIA

PRIME MINISTER SEES CRUCIAL MONTHS AHEAD

FL121415 Bridgetown ADVOCATE-NEWS in English 8 May 79 p 3 FL

[Text] Castries, St. Lucia, Monday, (CANA)--Prime Minister John Compton in a pre-election speech here has told the 13th annual convention of his ruling United Workers Party (UMP) that the months ahead will be the most crucial in the history of the country.

In less than four months St. Lucians will go to the polls to either vote in the opposition St. Lucia Labour Party or return the United Workers Party, which has already served 15 years in office.

In his 90-minute address, Mr. Compton said that in the coming elections the choice St. Lucians will be called on to make is clear, and so were the consequences. He said that they would have to decide whether they would continue to entrust the destiny of this independent nation, in the hands of a party which has guided them "from the darkness and despair of colonialism into the light of hope and expectation or independence, or whether they will be seduced by the siren song of the forces of evil and darkness, by the rantings and sloganeering of a group of self-seeking opportunists and adopt experiments which have brought much grief and suffering to many."

The prime minister said that his party was entering the battle armed with a record of achievements in every field. In the 15 years of UWP rule, the prime minister noted, his party achieved "a miracle of transformation and progress such as the island has never known."

GUYANA, LIBYA PLAN JOINT COMPANIES, TRADE

FL141835 Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 11 May 79 p 10 FL

[Excerpts] Georgetown, Thurs--Guyana may soon sell up to 30,000 tons of rice annually to oil-rich Libya, with longer term prospects for selling sugar and bauxite, as the two countries move to firm up links in trade and economic and cultural fields, it was announced here.

These matters were discussed here last week between Guyanese officials and a visiting Libyan team as part of an on going effort to formalize initiatives taken since 1977, Libyan Ambassador to Guyana Ahmed Ehwass told CANA yesterday.

Apart from trade, the two countries are discussing the possibility of setting up joint companies, with Guyana holding majority equity, for agriculture, fishing and maritime transport.

The total capital outlay for the three companies could be as high as $25 million (g) if proposals being studied in Georgetown and Tripoli are accepted, he said.

Mr. Ehwass stressed however that no concrete decisions have so far been reached, and the two countries are now studying proposals coming out of an exchange of views at last week's talks here.

"The discussion was very encouraging," he added.

Apart from that discussion, Mr Ehwass announced also that Libya will establish an Islamic cultural center in Georgetown, to be operated under the umbrella of the embassy, and aimed at strengthening ties between the two states in the field of culture.

Detains for the project, such as the cost and size, have not been finalised, but its work will include the teaching of Arabic and the provision of scholarships. It will be open to all Guyanese, the ambassador said.

According to Mr. Ehwass, the greatest barrier to trade, which is virtually non-existent at this time, is that of shipping. However, while the proposed maritime transport company will help in shipping problems between the two countries, that will not be its primary objective because of the paucity of cargo.

The company will operate generally in the field of international shipping, he said.

On the question of sugar purchaese, while Libya might wish to buy from Guyana, Libyans have traditionally bought refined sugar, which Guyana does not produce for export.

As a result, purchases of Guyanese sugar will have to await the completion of a sugar refinery now being construction in Libya.

World Prices

Similarly, in the field of bauxite, Libya has only just completed studies for the setting up of an aluminium smelter, and it will take at least another two years before Guyanese bauxite and alumina can be bought, Mr. Ehwass said.

Best immediate prospects exist in the purchase of rice, and the Guyana Rice Board is to send samples to the Libyan Government Import Agency after which it is likely that firm contracts will be agreed.

Mr. Ehwass said his country may take between 20,000 tons and 30,000 tons of the commodity annually. He explained that it is Libya's policy to buy commodities at world market prices, with only few exceptions where preferential prices are paid.

He explained further that discussions on trade between Guyana and Libya do not cover a possible barter deal in which Guyanese goods will be exchanged for Libyan oil. The transactions will all be straight commercial transactions, he added.

In the area of financial cooperation, Libya has lent Guyana five million dollars (US) to beef up its foreign currency reserves. Mr. Ehwass said the funds have already been transferred in hard currency to Guyana's account.

The Libyan team arrived here early last week from Argentina and then moved on at weekend to Panama after which it was due to go on to Jamaica, with some members then going on to Brazil and Cuba. (REUTER-CANA)

BURNHAM SAYS 'STRIKE MUST ONLY BE FOR A JUST CAUSE'

FL151340 Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 8 May 79 p 9 FL

[George Baird report]

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Forbes Burnham has reiterated that a strike must be called only if there is no alternative for a just cause. And he warned members of his own Guyana labour union that while as president-on-leave and prime minister he was the protector of their rights, he would not protect them when they acted irresponsibly.

His remarks were made on Saturday when he chided members of the transport section of the City Council for calling a strike because two drivers were transferred.

The prime minister said from the facts revealed to him the drivers were "accident prone" and were being transferred to another section with no loss of pay and this was happening against a background where there was a shortage of vehicles and complaints about defective vehicles.

According to him the two drivers were fortunate not to be redeployed permanently. "Let us always be responsible but resolute in the defence of the workers rights," the prime minister told the municipal workers and GLU officials.

Cde. Burnham said the strike called on Saturday was just as irresponsible as the one called by another union some time ago when a man was caught searching people's baggage at Timehri International Airport. The thing about such strikes, he noted, is that the country and the workers lose in the end.